

House debate of this bill. If you have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to call me. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

TOM DAVIS,
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 2119, legislation to allow the Secretary of Agriculture to convey to the State of North Carolina approximately 4.28 acres of Federal lands administered as part of the Oxford Research Station in Granville, North Carolina.

The bill addresses concerns raised by USDA with the original legislation. In a letter dated March 30, 2004, USDA acknowledged the strong, equitable interest the State of North Carolina has in the research station and stated it will gladly exercise the authority provided to convey the Oxford Research to the State of North Carolina once the legislation is enacted.

According to USDA estimates, the amendment will not significantly affect the Federal budget. In fact, the research station is currently unused and actually costs the USDA's property inventory funding to maintain it.

For all these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) for bringing up this legislation today.

The Oxford Research Station was established in 1912 as a crop and forestry research station. The station facilities include computerized curing barns, office facilities, a shop building, several equipment shelters, a tobacco evaluation facility and underground irrigation systems.

For 92 years, the station's marquee programs have been tobacco-related. Accomplishments at the Oxford Tobacco Research Station include fertility investigations concerning tobacco plants' nutrition; development of the first tobacco varieties with resistance to Granville Wilt and black shank disease; the invention of tobacco bulk curing barns; genetic studies to develop new varieties resistance to Granville Wilt and black shank diseases; evaluation of crop breeding lines, curing experiments, computerized monitoring and control of humidity and temperatures; and many others.

As long as a list of accomplishments that the station has accumulated in its 92 years of service to American agriculture, the station now stands unused by USDA, and American taxpayers are still paying for upkeep and maintenance. An unofficial estimate, Mr. Speaker, from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service for fiscal

year 2005 is that the station will cost \$227,000 for basic upkeep.

Mr. Speaker, one man's trash is another man's treasure. USDA does not want or need the Oxford Research Station, but the North Carolina Department of Agriculture does. If the facility is conveyed to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, the State will move its entire biological control program to the station. The State intends to use the quarantine facilities to research invasive species without risk of introducing them to the national environment of our State.

Among the species to be studied include the hemlock wooly adelgid, an insect that has been identified in Public Law 108-148, the President's Healthy Forest Initiative, as a forest-damaging insect. The facility will also research control methods of the Sudden Oak Death Fungus.

The people of North Carolina, Mr. Speaker, would be grateful for the passage of this legislation.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman from North Carolina on bringing forward a fine piece of legislation. I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the ranking member, for his work on this and other bills that we brought before the House tonight. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2119, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to provide for the conveyance of Federal lands, improvements, equipment, and resource materials at the Oxford Research Station in Granville County, North Carolina, to the State of North Carolina."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2119.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

□ 2030

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEARCE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. NORWOOD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for coordinating a discussion of a very important topic as we ask ourselves, "In the arena of health care, are we better off now than we were 4 years ago?"

In order to answer this question, are we better off, I need look no further than the innumerable, and often heart-breaking, letters and calls that I receive from people of Wisconsin's 2nd Congressional District every single day.

I get letters from seniors who detail the unbelievable choices they are forced to make, deciding whether to use their limited and fixed incomes for food or prescription drugs.

I get letters from small business owners who are agonizing over the fact that they can no longer afford the costs associated with offering insurance to their employees.